

Message Text

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SUBJECT: LEVESQUE TO ATTEND OTTAWA CONFERENCE, BEGINS PREPARING
FOR NEW ADMINISTRATION

1. RENE LEVESQUE'S PRESS SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 29 THAT QUEBEC'S NEWLY-INSTALLED PREMIER WILL ATTEND THE FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR OTTAWA DEC 13-14. IT WILL BE LEVESQUE'S FIRST MEETING WITH TRUDEAU SINCE THE ELECTION AND THE FIRST OFFICIAL OCCASION FOR THE OTHER NINE PROVINCIAL PREMIERS TO MEET NEW HEAD OF QUEBEC GOVERNMENT SINCE HIS ELECTION. LEVESQUE WILL ATTEND CONFERENCE DESPITE THE OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON DECEMBER 14. ASSEMBLY SESSION WILL BE BRIEF, DESIGNED ONLY TO SETTLE URGENT BUSINESS LEFT BY FORMER LIBERAL GOVERNMENT VOTE SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET AND PASS LEGISLATION PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF MINISTERS OF STATE IN THE CABINET.

2. LEVESQUE MET WITH HIS SEVEN SENIOR MINISTERS OVER THE WEEKEND TO BEGIN PREPARING FOR NEW ADMINISTRATION. THIS WAS THE FIRST MEETING FOR THE PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE WHICH WILL BE CHARGED WITH SETTLING GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES. IN ADDITION TO LEVESQUE, GROUP INCLUDES CLAUDE MORIN, MINISTER
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OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, JACQUES PARIZEAU, FINANCE MINISTER,

AND THE FIVE MINISTERS OF STATE: ROBERT BURNS, RESPONSIBLE FOR PARLIAMENTARY REFORM, CAMILLE LAURIN, CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, PIERRE MAROIS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, BERNARD LANDRY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND JACQUES LEONARD, PLANNING. LATTER GROUP HAVE CHARGED WITH INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATION AND PLANNING. THEY WILL HAVE NO LINE MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES. ROBERT MACKAY, LEVESQUE S PRESS SPOKESMAN, SAID NO MAJOR DECISIONS WERE TAKEN AT THE MEETING, WHICH WAS HELD TO "CLEAR THE GROUND."

3. COMMENT: LEVESQUE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED A JANUARY PREMIERS MEETING TO ALLOW HIMSELF TIME TO PREPARE BUT, FOLLOWING PRESS REPORTS THAT LOUGHEED COULD NOT COME IN JANUARY, HAS APPARENTLY DECIDED TO MEET HIS OLD ACQUAINTANCE, IF NOT FRIEND, PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU IN DECEMBER. MEANWHILE, HIS CABINET MEMBERS BEGAN OVER THE WEEKEND TO SPEAK OUT ON THEIR NEW AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AMONG THE MORE NOTABLE, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE RODRIGUE TREMBLAY PREDICTABLY STATED THAT NEW GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTIONS OF EXPROPRIATING INDUSTRIES. HE ADDED THAT HIS DEPARTMENT WILL TRY TO STIMULATE SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS INVESTMENT AS WELL AS FOREIGN INVESTMENT. EDUCATION MINISTER JACQUES-YVAN MORIN PROMISED TO DECENTRALIZE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. FINALLY SEVERAL MINISTERS BEGAN TO SPEAK OF CANCELLING OR CUTTING BACK SUBSTANTIALLY CONSTRUCTION PLANS AT THE OLYMPIC STADIUM SITE AND RETARDING CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE AT JAMES BAY SITE.

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